

A DISCOVRSE

CONCERNING
PRAYER *Ex tempore*;

. O R,

By pretence of the Spirit,

In justification of Authorized and
Set-formes of LYTURGIE.

I COR. 14. 32.

Πνεύματα προφητῶν ὑποτάσσεται Ὁυ ᾧ ὄζειν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ Θεός,
ἀλλ' εἰρήνης, ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ᾧ ἁγίων.

*And the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets.
For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.*



Printed in the Yeere,
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D I C O N A R Y

BY THE
REV. J. H. ...
OF THE ...
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And the ...
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Printed in the Year
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A Discourse concerning P R A Y E R

Ex tempore, &c.

Have read over this book which the Assembly of Divines is pleased to call *The Directory for Prayer*, I confesse I came to it with much expectation, and was in some measure confident, I should have found it an exact and unblameable modell of Devotion, free from all those objections which men of their owne perswasion had obtruded against the publike Liturgy of the Church of England; or at least, it should have been composed with so much artifice and finenesse, that it might have been to all the world, an argument of their learning and excellency of spirit, if not of the goodnesse and integrity of their religion and purposes. I shall give no other character of the whole, but that the publike disrelish which I finde amongst persons of great piety, of all qualities, not onely of great, but even of ordinary understandings, is to me some argument that it lyes so open to the objections even of common spirits, that the compilers of it did intend more to prevaile by the successe of their Armies, then the strength of reason, and the proper grounds of perswasion, which yet most wise and good men beleve to be the more Christian way of the two. But Sir you have engaged me to say something in particular to satisfie your conscience. In which also I

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desire I may reserve a leave to my self to conceal much, if I may in little doe you satisfaction.

2.

I shall therefore decline to speak of the Efficient cause of this Directory, and not quarrell at it that it was composed, against the Lawes both of *England* and all Christendome. If the thing were good and pious, I should learne to submit to the imposition, and never quarrell at the incompetency of his authority that ingaged me to doe pious and holy things. And it may be when I am a little more used to it, I shall not wonder at a Synod, in which not one Bishop sits (in the capacity of a Bishop) though I am most certaine this is the first example in *England*, since it was first Christned. But for the present it seemes something hard to digest it, because I know so well that all Assemblies of the Church have admitted Priests to consultation and dispute, but never to authority and decision, till the Pope enlarging the phylacteries of the Archimandrites and Abbots, did sometimes by way of priviledge and dispensation give to some of them decisive voyces in publike Councells. But this was one of the things in which he did innovate and invade against the publike resolutions of Christendome, though he durst not doe it often, and when he did it, it was in very small and inconsiderate numbers.

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I said I would not meddle with the Efficient, and I cannot meddle with the Finall cause, nor guesse at any other ends and purposes of theirs then at what they publicely professe, which is the abolition and destruction of the Book of Common Prayer; which great change, because they are pleased to call Reformation, I am content in charity to beleeve they think it so, and that they have *Zelum Dei*, but whether *secundum scientiam*, according to knowledge or no, must be judged by them who consider

consider the matter and the forme.

But because the matter is of so great variety and minute consideration, every part whereof would require as much scrutiny as I purpose to bestow upon the whole, I have for the present chosen to consider onely the forme of it; and because it pretends against the forme of set Lyturgie, and that *ex tempore* forms doe succeed in room of the established and determined services, I shall give you my judgement of it, without any sharpnesse or bitterness of spirit, for I am resolved not to be angry with any men of another perswasion, as knowing that I differ just as much from them as they doe from me.

And first I consider that the true state of the Question is only this, Whether it is better to pray to God with consideration or without? whether is the wiser man of the two, he who thinks, and deliberates what to say, or he that utters his mind as fast as it comes? Whether is the better man, he who out of reverence to God is most carefull and curious that he offend not in his tongue, and therefore he himselfe deliberates and takes the best guides he can, or he who out of the confidence of his owne abilities or other exteriour assistances, speakes what ever comes uppermost?

And here I have the advice and counsell of a very wise man, no lesse than *Solomon. Eccles. 5.2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* The consideration of the vast distance between God and us, Heaven and earth, should create such apprehensions in us, that the very best and choicest of our offertories are not acceptable but by Gods gracious vouchsafeing and condescension: and therefore since we are so much indebted to God for accepting our

best it is not safe ventured to present him with a dowe-baked sacrifice, and put him off with that which in nature and humane consideration is absolutely the worst, for such is all the crude and imperfect utterance of our more imperfect conceptions. But let *Solomons* reason be what it will, good we are sure it is. Let us consider who keepes the precept best; He that deliberates or he that considers not but when he speakes: What man in the world is hasty *to offer any thing before God*, if he be not who prays *ex tempore*? And then adde to it but the weight of *Solomons* reason, and let any man answer me if he thinkes it can well stand with that reverence we owe to the Immense, the infinite, and to the eternall God, the God of wisdom, to offer him a sacrifice which we durst not present to a Prince, or a prudent Governour in *reseriâ*, such as our prayers ought to be.

7. And that this may not be dashed with a pretence it is carnall reasoning, I desire it may be remembred, that it is the argument God himselfe uses against lame, maimed, and imperfect sacrifices, *Goe and offer this to thy Prince*, See if he will accept it: Im, lying, that the best person is to have the best present; and what the Prince will slight as truely unworthy of him, much more is it unfit for God. For God accepts not of any thing we give or doe, as if he were bettred by it: for therefore its estimate is not taken by its relation or naturall complacency to him, it is all alike to him, for in it selfe it is to him as nothing. But God accepts it by its proportion, and commensuration to us. That which we call our best, and is truly so in humane estimate, that pleases God, for it declares that if we had better, we would give it him. But to reserve the best, sayes too plainly, that we think

think any thing is good enough for him. As therefore God in the Law would not be served by that which was imperfect in *genere naturæ*: so neither now nor ever will that please him which is imperfect in *genere morum*, or *materia intellectuali*, when we can give a better.

Well then, in the nature of the thing, *ex tempore* forms have much the worse of it. But it is pretended that there is such a thing as the gift of Prayer, a praying with the Spirit, *Et nescit tarda molimina spiritus sancti gratia*. Gods Spirit (if he pleases) can doe his work as well in an instant, as in long premeditation. And to this purpose are pretended those places of Scripture which speak of the assistance of Gods Spirit in our prayers. *Zech. 12. 10. And I will poure upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication.* But especially *Rom. 8. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, &c.* From whence the Conclusion that is inferred is in the words of Saint Paul, *That we must pray with the spirit*, therefore not with set formes, therefore *ex tempore*.

The Collection is somewhat wild, for there is great independence in the severall parts, and much more is in the Conclusion, then was virtually in the premises. But such as it is, the Authors of it I suppose will owne it. And therefore we will examine the maine designe of it, and then consider the particular meanes of its perswasion, quoted in the objection.

It is one of the priviledges of the Gospel, and the benefit of Christs ascension, that the holy Ghost is given unto the Church, and is become to us the fountaine of gifts and graces. But these gifts and graces are improvements

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ments and helps of our naturall faculties, of our art and industry, not extraordinary, miraculous, and immediate infusions of habits and gifts. That without Gods Spirit we cannot pray aright; that our infirmities need his help; that we know not what to aske of our selves, is most true: and if ever any Heretique was more confident of his owne naturals, or did ever more undervalue Gods grace then ever the Pelagian did, yet he denyes not this. But what then? Therefore without study, without art, without premeditation, without learning, the spirit gives the gift of prayer, and it is his grace, that without any naturall or artificiall help makes us pray *ex tempore*? No such thing: The Objection proves nothing of this.

Here therefore we will joyn issue, whether the gifts and helps of the Spirit, be immediate infusions of the Faculties, and powers, and perfect abilities? Or that he doth assist us onely by his aydes externall and internall, in the use of such meanes which God and nature hath givento man, to ennoble his soule, better his Faculties, and to improve his understanding? That the aydes of the holy Ghost are onely assistances to us in the use of naturall and artificiall meanes I will undertake to prove, and from thence it will evidently follow, that labour, and hard study, and premeditation will soonest purchase the gift of prayer, and ascertain us of the assistance of the spirit, and therefore set formes of prayer, studied and considered of are in a true and proper sense, and without enthusiasme, the fruits of the spirit.

1. Gods Spirit did assist the Apostles by wayes extraordinary, and fit for the first institution of Christianity: but doth assist us now by the expresses of those first assistances which he gave to them immediately. So that

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that the holy Ghost is the author of our faith, and we beleeve with the spirit (it is Saint *Pauls* expreffion) and yet our beliefe comes by hearing and reading the holy Scriptures and their interpretations. Now reconcile these two together, Faith comes by hearing, and yet is the gift of the Spirit, and it fayer, that the gifts of the Spirit are not extasies, and immediate infusions of habits, but helps from God to enable us upon the use of the meanes of his owne appointment to beleeve, to speak, to understand, to prophecy, and to pray.

2. And that these are for this reason called gifts, and graces, and issues of the Spirit, is so evident and notorious, that the speaking of an ordinary revealed truth, is called in Scripture *a speaking by the Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 8. *Vid. Act. 19. 21*
No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost. *Act. 16. 7, 8, 9, 10.*
For if the holy Ghost suppliyes us with materials, and fundamentals for our building, it is then enough to denominate the whole edifice to be of him, although the labour and the workmanship be ours, upon another stock. And this is it which the Apostles speaks, 1 Cor. 2. 13. *Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spirituall things with spirituall.* The holy Ghost teaches, yet it is upon our cooperation, our study and endeavour, while we compare spirituall things with spirituall; the holy Ghost is said to teach us, because these spirituals were of his suggestion and revelation.

3. For it is a rule of the Schoole, and there is much reason in it. *Habitus infusi infunduntur per modum acquisitorum*, whatsoever is infused into us, is in the same manner infused as other things are acquired, that is, step by step, by humane means and cooperation, and grace does not give us new faculties, and create another nature, but

but meliorates and improves our owne. And what S. Paul said in the Resurrection, is also true in this Question, *That is not first which is spirituall, but that which is naturall and then that which is spirituall.* The graces and gifts of the Spirit are postnate, and are additions to art and nature. God directs our counsels, opens our understandings, regulates our will, orders our affections, supplies us with objects, and arguments, and opportunities, & revelations *in scriptis*, & then most when we most imploy our owne endeavours, God loving to blesse all the meanes, and instruments of his service, whether they be naturall or acquisite.

15. But whosoever shall look for any other gifts of the spirit besides the parts of nature helped by industry and Gods blessing upon it, and the revelations or the supplies of matter in holy Scripture, will be very farre to seeke, having neither reason, promise, nor experience of his side. For why should the spirit of Prayer be any other than as the gift and spirit of faith (as S. Paul calls it, 2 Cor. 4. 13.) acquired by humane meanes using divine aids? that is, by our endeavours in hearing, reading, Catechizing, desires to obey, and all this blessed and promoted by God, this produces faith. And if the spirit of Prayer be of greater consequence, and hath a promise of a speciall prerogative, let the first be proved and the second be shewne in any good record, and then I will beleieve it too.

16. 4. And the parallel of this argument I the rather urge, because I find praying in the holy Ghost joyned with graces, which are as much Gods gifts & productions of the spirit as any thing in the world, and yet which the Apostle presses upon us as duties and things put into our power, and to be improved by our industry, and those

those are faith (in which I before instanced) and charity. Epist. Jud. ver. 20. But ye (beloved) building up your selves on your most holy Faith, praying in the holy Ghost, keep your selves in the love of God. All of the same consideration, Faith, and Prayer, and Charity, all gifts of the Spirit, and yet build up your selves in faith, and keep your selves in love, and therefore by a parity of reason, improve your selves in the spirit of prayer, that is, God by his spirit having supplied us with matter, let our industry and co-operations *per modum naturæ*, improve these gifts, and build upon this foundation.

So that in effect praying in the holy Ghost or with the spirit is nothing but prayer for such things and in such manner which God by his spirit hath taught us in holy Scripture. Holy Prayers, Spirituall songs, so the Apostle calls one part of prayer, *viz.* Eucharisticall or thanksgiving, that is, prayers or songs which are spirituall *in materiâ*. And if they be called spirituall for the efficient cause too, the holy Ghost being the author of them, it comes all to one, for therefore he is the cause and giver of them, because he hath in his word revealed, what things we are to pray for, & there also hath taught us the manner.

And this is exactly the Doctrine I plainly gather from the objected words of Saint Paul, (*The spirit helpeth our infirmities*) How so? it followes immediately, *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought*: So that therefore he is the spirit of supplication and prayer, because he teaches us what to ask, and how to pray, so he helps our infirmities, *συνανταυβάει*, it is in the Greek *Col-laborantem adjuvat*. It is an ingeminate expression of helping us in our labours together with him. Now he that shall say this is not sufficiently done by Gods spirit

in scripture by Prayers, and Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, and precepts concerning prayer, set downe in that holy repository of truth and devotion, undervalues that inestimable treasure of the spirit; and if it be sufficiently done there, he that will multiply his hopes farther, then what is sufficient, may possibly deceive himselfe, but never deceive God, and make him multiply and continue miracles, to justifie his fancy.

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5. Better it is to follow the Scriptures for our guide, as in all things else, so in this particular. *Ephes. 6. 17, 18. Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying alwayes, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit.* The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; praying in the Spirit is one way of using it, indeed the onely way that he here specifies. Praying in the Spirit then being the using of this Sword, and this Sword being the Word of God, it followes evidently, that praying in the Spirit, is praying in or according to the Word of God, that is, in the directions, rules and expresses of the Word of God, that is, of the holy Scriptures.

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The summe is this. Whatsoever this gift is, or this spirit of Prayer, it is to be acquired by humane industry, by learning of the Scriptures, by reading, by conference, and by whatsoever else faculties are improved, and habits enlarged. Gods Spirit hath done his work sufficiently this way, and he loves not either in nature or grace (which are his two great sanctions) to multiply miracles when there is no need.

21.

6. So that now I demand, Whether or no, since the expiration of the age of miracles, does not Gods Spirit most assist us, when we most endeavour and most use the meanes? He that sayes, No, discourages all men from reading the Scriptures, from industry, from meditation,
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from conference, from humane Arts and Sciences, and from whatsoever else God and good Lawes provoke us to by proposition of rewards: But if, Yea, (as most certainly God will best crown the best endeavours) then the spirit of Prayer is greatest in him, who (supposing the like capacities and opportunities) studies hardest, reads most, practices most religiously, deliberates most prudently; and then by how much want of means, is worse then the use of means, by so much *ex tempore* Prayers are worse then deliberate and studied. Excellent therefore is the counsell of S. Peter, 1 Ep. Chap. 4. ver. 11. *If any man speake, let him speak as the Oracles of God, (not lightly then and inconsiderately) If any man minister, let him doe it as of the ability which God giveth:* (great reason then to put all his abilities and faculties to it) and whether of the two does most likely doe that, he that takes paines, and considers, and discusses, and so approves and practices a forme, or he that never considers what he sayes, till he sayes it, needs not much deliberation to passe a sentence.

7. Lastly, did not the Penmen of the Scripture, write the Epistles and Gospels respectively all by the Spirit? Most certainly, holy men of God *spoke as they were moved by the holy Ghost,* saith Saint Peter. And certainly they were moved by a more immediate motion, & a motion neerer to an Enthufiasme, then now adayes in the gift and spirit of Prayer. And yet in the mist of those great assistances and motions they did use study, art, industry, and humane abilities. This is more then probable in the different styles of the severall Books, some being of admirable art, others lower and plaine. The words were their own at least somtimes, not the holy Ghosts. And if the Fathers and Grammarians were not deceived

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by false Copies, but that they truly did observe, sometimes to be propriety of expression in the language, sometimes not true Greeke, who will think those errors or imperfections in Grammar, were (in respect of the words I say precisely) immediate inspirations and dictates of the holy Ghost, and not rather their own productions of industry and humanity? But clearly some of their words were the words of *Aratus*, some of *Epimenides*, some of *Menander*, some of *S. Paul*, [*This speake I, not the Lord*, 1 Cor. 7.] and yet because the holy Ghost renewed their memory, improved their understanding, supplied to some their want of humane learning, and so assisted them that they should not commit an error in fact or opinion, neither in the narrative nor dogmaticall parts, therefore they writ by the Spirit. Since then we cannot pretend upon any grounds of probability to an inspiration so immediate as theirs, and yet their assistances which they had from the Spirit did not exclude humane arts, and industry, but that the ablest Scholler did write the best, much rather is this true in the gifts and assistances we receive, and particularly in the gift of Prayer, it is not an *ex tempore* and an inspired faculty, but the faculties of nature and the abilities of art & industry are improved and ennobled by the supervening assistances of the Spirit.

23.

And now let us take a man that pretends he hath the gift of Prayer, and loves to pray *ex tempore*, I suppose his thoughts goe a little before his tongue; I demand then, Whether cannot this man, when it is once come into his head, hold his tongue, and write downe what he hath conceived? If his first conceptions were of God, and Gods Spirit, then they are so still, even when they are written. Or is the Spirit departed from him, upon the
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fight of a pen and Ink-horne ? It did use to be otherwise among the old and new Prophets, whether they were Prophets of Prediction, or of ordinary Ministry. But if his conception may be written, and being written is still a production of the Spirit, then it follows that set-forms of Prayer deliberate and described, may as well be a praying with the Spirit, as sudden formes and *ex tempore* out-lets.

Now the case being thus put, I would faine know what the difference is betweene deliberate and *extempore* Prayers, save onely that in these there is lesse consideration and prudence; for that the other are (at least as much as them) the productions of the Spirit, is evident in the very case put in this very argument: and whether to consider and to weigh them, be any disadvantage to our devotions, I leave it to all wise men to determine. So that in effect, since after the pretended assistance of the Spirit in our Prayers, we may write them downe, consider them, try the spirits, and ponder the manner, the reason and the religion of the addresse; let the world judge whether this sudden utterance and *ex tempore* forms be any thing else, but a direct resolution not to consider before-hand what we speak.

But let us look a little further into the mysterie, and see what is meant in Scripture by *praying with the Spirit*. In what sense the holy Ghost is called the *spirit of Prayer*, I have already shewne, viz. by the same reason, as he is the *spirit of faith*, of *prudence*, of *knowledge*, of *understanding*, and the like. But *praying with the spirit* hath besides this other senses also in Scripture. I find in one place, that then we pray with the Spirit, when the holy Ghost does actually excite us to desires and earnest tendencies to the obtaining our holy purposes, when he gives us
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zeale and devotion, charity and fervour, spirituall violence and holy importunity. This sense is also in the latter part of the objected words of Saint *Paul*, *Rom. 8. The Spirit it selfe maketh intercession for us with groanings, &c.* Indeed this is truly a praying in the spirit, but this will doe our reverend Brethren of the Assembly little advantage as to the present Question. For this spirit is not a spirit of utterance; not at all clamorous in the eares of the people, but cryes loud in the eares of God with [*groanes unutterable*] so it followes, and onely [*He that searcheth the heart, he understandeth the meaning of the spirit.*] This is the spirit of the Sonne, which God hath sent into our hearts, (not into our tongues) whereby we cry, *Abba, Father, Gal. 4. 6.* And this is the great *advantage* for mentall Prayer, which is properly and truly praying by the Spirit.

26.

Another praying with the Spirit I find in that place of Saint *Paul*, from whence this expression is taken, and commonly used, *I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.* Here they are opposed, or at least declared to be things severall and disparate: where by the way observe, that praying with the spirit, even in sense of Scripture, is not alwayes most to edification of the people. Not alwayes with understanding. And when these two are separated, *S. Paul* prefers five words with understanding, before ten thousand in the spirit. For this praying with the spirit was indeed then a gift extraordinary and miraculous, like as prophecying with the spirit, and expired with it. But while it did last, it was the lowest of gifts, *Inter dona linguarum*, it was but a gift of the tongue, and not to be the benefit of the Church directly or immediately.

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By the way only. If Saint *Paul* did so undervalue the praying

praying with the Spirit, that he preferred edifying the Church a thousand degrees beyond it. I suppose he would have been of the same mind, if this Question had been between praying with the Spirit and obeying our superiors, as he was when it was between praying with the Spirit and edification of the Church, because (if I be not mistaken) it is matter of great concernment towards the edification of the Church to obey our superiours, not to innovate in publick formes of worship, especially with the scandall and offence of very wise and learned men, and to the disgrace of the dead Martyrs, who sealed our Liturgy with their blood.

But to return. In this place praying with the Spirit, is no more than my spirit praying. For so *S. Paul* joynes them as termes identicall, and expressive one of anothers meaning, as you may please to read *ver. 14. and 15. 1 Cor. 14. I will pray with the Spirit, and my Spirit truly prayeth.* It is the act of our inner man, praying holy and spirituall Prayers. But then indeed at that time there was something extraordinary joyned, for it was in an unknowne tongue, the practice of which Saint *Paul* there dislikes. This also will be to none of their purposes. For whether it were *ex tempore*, or by premeditation, is not here expressed; or if it had, yet that assistance extraordinary in prayer, if there was any beside the gift of tongues (which I much doubt) is no more transmitted to us, then the speaking tongues in the spirit, or prophesying *Ex tempore* and by the spirit.

28.

But I would adde also one experiment which *S. Paul* also there addes by way of instance. If praying with the spirit in this place be praying *ex tempore*, then so is singing too. For they are expressed in the same place, in the same manner, to the same end, and I know no reason why

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why these should be differing senses put upon them to serve purposes. And now let us have some Church-musicke too, though the Organs be pulled downe, and let any the best Psalmist of them all, compose a hymne in metricall forme, and sing it to a new tune with perfect and true musick, and all this *ex tempore*. For all this the holy Ghost can doe if he pleases. But if it be said that the Corinthian Christians composed their songs and hymnes according to art and rules of musick, by study and industry, and that to this they were assisted by the Spirit; and that this together with the devotion of their spirit, was singing with the spirit, then say I, so composing set formes of Liturgy by skil and prudence, and humane industry, may be as much praying with the spirit as the other is singing with the spirit. Plainely enough. In all the senses of praying with the spirit, & in all its acceptations in Scripture, to pray or sing with the spirit, neither of them of necessity implies *ex tempore*.

30. The summe or *Collecta* of the premises is this, Praying with the spirit, is either when the spirit stirres up our desires to pray, *Per motionem actualis auxilii*, or when the spirit teaches us what, or how to pray, telling us the matter, and manner of our prayers. Or lastly, dictating the very words of our prayers. There is no other way in the world to pray with the spirit, or in the holy Ghost, that is pertinent to this Question. And of this last manner the Scripture determines nothing, nor speakes any thing expressely of it, and yet suppose it had, we are certaine the holy Ghost hath supplied us with all these, and yet in set formes of prayer best of all, I meane there where a difference can be. For as for the desires, and actuall motions or incitements to pray, they are indifferent to one or the other, to set formes or
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to *ex tempore*. 2. But as to the matter and manner of prayer, it is cleerly contained in the expreffes, and set formes of Scriptures, and it is fupplied to us by the fpirit, for he is the great Dictator of it.

Now then for the very words. No man can affure me that the words of his *ex tempore* prayer are the words of the holy Spirit: it is not reason nor modesty to expect fuch immediate affiftances to fo little purpofe, he having fupplied us with abilities more then enough to exprefse our defires *aliunde*, otherwife then by immediate dictate. But if we will take *Dauids* Pfalter, or the other hymnes of holy Scripture, or any of the Prayers which are refperfed over the Bible, we are fure enough that they are the words of Gods Spirit, mediately or immediately, by way of infufion or extafie, by vifion, or at leaft by ordinary affiftance. And now then, what greater confidence can any man have for the excellency of his Prayer, and the probability of their being accepted, then when he prayes his Pfalter, or the Lords prayer, or another office which he finds configned in Scripture? When Gods Spirit ftirs us up to an actuall devotion, and then we use the matter he hath described and taught, and the very words which Chrift, and Chriffs Spirit, and the Apostles, and other perfons full of the holy Ghost did use; if in the world there be any praying with the Spirit, (I meane in vocall prayer) this is it.

And thus I have examined the intire and full fcope of this Queftion, and rifed their Objection. Now I fhall proceed to fome few arguments which are more extrinfecall to the nature of the thing.

It is a practice prevailing among thofe of our Brethren that are zealous for *ex tempore* prayers, to pray their Sermons over, to reduce their doctrine into Devotion and

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Lyturgie. I mislike it not for the thing it selfe, if it were done regularly for the manner, and the matter were alwayes pious and true. But who shall assure me when the preacher hath disputed, or rather dogmatically decreed a point of predestination, or of prescience, of contingency, or of liberty, or any of the most mysterious parts of Divinity, and then prayes his Sermon over, that he then prayes with the Spirit? Unlesse I be sure that he also preached with the Spirit, I cannot be sure that he prayes with the spirit, for all he prayes *ex tempore*. Nay if I heare a Protestant preach in the morning, and an Anabaptist in the afternoone, to day a Presbyterian, to morrow an Independant, am I not most sure that when they have preached Contradictories, and all of them pray their Sermons over, that they doe not all pray with the spirit? More than one in this case cannot pray with the spirit, possibly all may pray against him.

33.

2. From whence I thus argue in behalfe of set forms of prayer. That in the case above put, how shall I or any man else say Amen to their prayers that preach and pray contradictories? At least I am much hindred in my devotion. For besides that, it derives our opinions into our devotions, makes every schoole point, become our religion, and makes God a party, (so farre as we can) intitling him to our impertinent wranglings. Besides this, I say, while we should attend to our addresses towards God, we are to consider whether the point be true or no, & by that time we have tacitly discoursed it, we are upon another point which also perhaps is as Questionable as the former, and by this time our spirit of devotion, is a little discomposed and something out of countenance, there is so much other imployment for the spirit, the spirit of discerning and judging. All which
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inconveniencies are avoyded in set formes of Liturgy. For we know before hand the conditions of our Communion, and to what we are to say Amen, to which if we like it we may repayre; if not, there is no harm done, your devotion shall not be surprized, nor your Communion invaded, as it may be and often is in your *ex tempore* prayers. And this thing hath another collaterall inconvenience, which is of great consideration, for upon what confidence can we sollicite any Recusants to come to our Church, where we cannot promise them that the devotions there to be used, shall be innocent, nor can we put him into a condition to judge for himselfe? If he will venture he may, but we can use no argument to make him choose our Churches, though he should quit his owne.

3. But againe, let us consider with sobriety. Are not those prayers and hymnes in holy Scripture, excellent compositions, admirable instruments of devotion, full of piety, rare and incomparable addressees to God? Dare any man with his gift of prayer pretend, that he can *ex tempore* or by study make better? Who dares pretend that he hath a better spirit then *David* had, or then the Apostles and Prophets, and other holy persons in Scripture, whose Prayers and Psalmes are by Gods Spirit consigned to the use of the Church for ever? Or will it be denyed but that they also are excellent directories and patterns for prayer? And if patternes, the neerer we draw to our example, are not the imitations and representations the better? And what then if we took the samplers themselves, is there any imperfection in them, and can we mend them and correct *Magnificat*?

In a just porportion and commensuration, I argue so concerning the primitive and ancient formes of Church service,

service, which are composed according to those so excellent patternes, which if they had remained pure as in their first institution, or had alwayes beene as they have beene reformed by the Church of England, they would against all defiance put in for the next place to those formes of Liturgie which *Mutatis mutandis* are nothing but the Words of Scripture. But I am resolved at this present not to enter into Question concerning the matter of prayers. But for the forme this I say further.

36.

4. That the Church of God hath the promise of the spirit made to her in generall, to her in her Catholicke and united capacity, to the whole Church first, then to particular Churches, then in the lowest seate of the Category to single persons. Now then I infer, if any single persons will have us to beleve without all possibility of prooffe (for so it must be) that they pray with the Spirit, (for how shal they be able to prove the spirit actually to abide in those single persons) then much rather must we beleve it of the Church, which by how much the more generall it is, so much the more of the spirit she is likely to have : & then if there be no errors in the matter, the Church hath the advantage and probability on her side, and if there be an error in matter in either of them, they faile of their pretences, neither of them have the spirit. But the publick spirit in all reason is to be trusted before the private, when there is a contestation, the Church being *Prior & potior in promissis*, she hath a greater and *prior* title to the spirit. And why the Church hath not the spirit of prayer in her compositions as well as any of her children, I desire once for all to be satisfied upon true grounds either of reason or revelation.

5. Or if the Church shall be admitted to have the gift, and the spirit of prayer given unto her by virtue of the great promise of the spirit, to abide with her for ever, yet for all this she is taught to pray in a set forme of prayer, and yet by the spirit too. For what thinke we? When Christ taught us to pray in that incomparable modell, the Lords Prayer, if we pray that prayer devoutly, and with pious and actuall intention, doe we not pray in the Spirit of Christ, as much as if we prayed any other forme of words pretended to be taught us by the Spirit? We are sure that Christ and Christs Spirit taught us this Prayer, they onely gather by conjectures and opinions, that in their *ex tempore* formes the spirit of Christ teaches them. So much then as certainties are better then uncertainties, and God above man, so much is this set forme (besides the infinite advantages in the matter) better than their *ex tempore* formes in the forme it selfe.

37.

6. If I should descend to minates and particulars, I could instance in the behalfe of set forms, that God prescribed to *Moses* a set form of prayer and benediction to be used when he did blesse the people. 7. That *Moses* composed a song or hymne for the children of Israel to use to all their generations. 8. That *David* composed many for the service of the tabernacle. 9. That *Solomon* and the holy Kings of *Judah* brought them in and continued them in the ministration of the temple. 10. That all Scripture is written for our learning, & since all these and many more set forms of prayer left there upon record, it is more then probable that they were left there for our use and devotion. 11. That S. *John* Baptist taught his Disciples a forme of prayer. 12. And that Christs Disciples begged the same favour, and it was granted

38.

granted as they desired it. 13. And that Christ gave it not onely *in massa materia*, but *in forma verborum*; not in a confused heap of matter, but in an exact composure of words, it makes it evident, he intended it not onely *pro regula petendorum*, for a direction of what things wee are to aske, but also *pro forma orationis*, for a set forme of Prayer. In which also I am most certainly confirmed (besides the universall testimony of Gods Church so attesting it) in the precept which Christ added, *When ye pray, pray after this manner*: and indeed it points not the matter onely of our prayers, but the forme of it, the manner and the matter of the addresse both. But in the repetition of it by Saint *Luke*, the preceptive words seem to limit us, and direct us to this very form of words, *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.* 14. I could also adde the example of all the Jewes, and by consequence of our blessed Saviour, who sung a great part of *Dauids* Psalter in their feast of Passeover, which part is called by the Jewes the great *Hallelu-jah*, it begins at the 113. Psalme, and ends at the 118. inclusively. And the Scripture mentions it as part of our blessed Saviours devotion, and of his Disciples, that they sung a Psalme. 15. That this afterward became a Precept Evangelical, that we should praise God in Hymnes, Psalmes, and spirituall Songs, which is a forme of Liturgie, in which we sing with the spirit, but yet cannot make our Hymnes *ex tempore*, (it would be wild stufte if we should goe about it.) 16. And lastly, that a set forme of worship and addresse to God was recorded by Saint *Iohn*, and sung in heaven, and it was composed out of the songs of *Moses*, (*Exod. 15.*) of *David*, (*Psal. 145.*) and of *Feremy*, (*Chap. 10. 6, 7.*) which certainly is a very good precedent for us to imitate, although but revealed to

to Saint *John* by way of vision and extasie. All which and many more are to me as so many arguments of the use, excellency, and necessity of set-formes of Prayer for publike Lyrurgies, as and of greatest conveniencies, even for private devotions.

17. And so the Church of God in all Ages did understand it. I shall not multiply authorities to this purpose, for they are too many and various; but shall onely observe two great instances of their beliete and practice in this particular. 1. The one is the perpetuall use and great Eulogies of the Lords Prayer, assisted by the many Commentaries of the Fathers upon it. 2. The other is that solemne forme of benediction and mysticall prayer (as Saint *Augustine* calls it, *Lib. 3. de Trinit. c. 4.*) which all Churches (and themselves said it was by Ordinance Apostolicall) used in the Consecration of the blessed Sacrament. But all of them used the Lords Prayer in the Canon, and office of Consecration, and other prayerstaken from Scripture, (so *Iustin Martyr* testifies, that the Consecration is made *per preces verbi Dei*, by the prayers taken from the Word of God) and the whole Canon was short determined and mysterious.

Who desires to be further satisfied in this particular, shal find enough in *Walafridus Strabo*, *Aymonius*, *Cassander*, *Flacius Illyricus*, *Iosephus Vicecomes*, and the other Ritualists, and in the old offices themselves. So that I need not put you in mind of that famous doxologie of the *Gloria Patri*, &c. nor the *Trisagion*, nor any of those memorable hymnes used in the ancient Church, so knownly and frequently, that the beginning of them came to be their name, and they were knowne more by their owne words, then the Authors inscription.

At last when some men that thought themselves bet-

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ter gifted would be venturing at conceived formes of their owne, there was a timely restraint made in the Councell of *Milevis* in *Africa*, *Placuit ut preces quæ probatæ fuerint in Concilio ab omnibus celebrentur, nec aliæ omnino dicantur in Ecclesia, nisi quæ à prudentioribus factæ fuerint in Synodo.* That's the restraint and prohibition, publike prayers must be such as are publikely appointed, and prescribed by our Superiours; and no private forms of our conceiving must be used in the Church. The reason followes, *Ne forte aliquid contra fidem, vel per ignorantiam, vel per minus studium sit compositum:* Lest through ignorance or want of deliberation any thing be spoken in our prayers against faith [and good manners.] The reason is good; and they are eare-witnesses of it that heare the variety of prayers before and after Sermons, there, where the Directory is practiced, where (to speak most modestly) not onely their private opinions, but also humane interests, and their owne personall concerns, and wild fancies, borne perhaps not two daies before, are made the objects of the peoples hopes, of their desires, and their prayers, and all in the meane time pretend to the holy Spirit.

42.

I will not now instance in the vaine glory that is appendant to these *ex tempore* formes of prayer, where the gift of the man is more then the devotion of the man: nor will I consider that then his gift is best, when his prayer is longest: and if he take a complacency in his gift (as who is not apt to doe it?) he will be sure to extend his Prayer, till a suspicious and scrupulous man would be apt to say, his prayer pressed hard upon that which our blessed Saviour reprehended in the Pharisees, who thought to be heard for their much babling. But these things are accidentall to the nature of the thing. And

And therefore though they are too certainly consequent to the person, yet I will not be too severe, but preserve my selfe on the surer side of charitable construction, which truly I desire to keep, not onely to their persons whom I much reverence, but also to their actions. But yet I durst not doe the same thing, even for these last reasons, though I had no other.

But it is objected, that in set formes of Prayer, we re-
 straine and confine the blessed Spirit; and in conceived
 formes, when every man is left to his liberty, then the
 Spirit is free, unlimited and unconstrained.

43.

I answer, either their conceived formes (I use their
 owne words, though indeed the expression is very in-
 artificiall) are premeditate and described, or they are
ex tempore. If they be premeditate and described, then
 the Spirit is as much limited in their conceived formes,
 as in the Churches conceived forms. For as to this par-
 ticular, it is all one who describes and limits the forme,
 whether the Church, or a single man does it, still the
 Spirit is in constraint and limit. So that in this case they
 are not angry at set formes of Prayer, but that they doe
 not make them. And if it be replyed, that if a single
 person composes a set form, he may alter it if he please,
 and so his spirit is at liberty. I answer, so may the
 Church; if she see cause for it: and unlesse there be
 cause, the single person will not alter it, unlesse he doe
 things unreasonable, and without cause. So that it will
 be an unequal and a peevish quarrell to allow of set
 formes of prayer made by private persons, and not of
 set formes made by the publike spirit of the Church.
 It is evident, that the Spirit is limited in both a-
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But if by [*Conceived formes*] in this objection they
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meane *ex tempore* prayers (for so they most generally practice it) and that in the use of these the liberty of the spirit is best preserved. To this I answer, that the being *ex tempore* or premeditate will be wholly impertinent to this Question of limiting the spirit. For there may be great liberty in set formes, even when there is much variety; and there may be great restraint in *ex tempore* prayers, even then when it shall be called unlawfull to use set formes. That the spirit is restrained, or that it is free in either, is accidentall to them both; for it may be either free or not free in both as it may happen.

46.

But the restraint is this, that every one is not left to his liberty to pray how he list, (with premeditation or without, it makes not much matter) but that he is prescribed unto by the spirit of another. But if it be a fault thus to restraine the spirit, I would faine know, is not the spirit restrained when the whole Congregation shall be confined to the forme of this one mans composing? or it shall be unlawfull, or at least a disgrace and disparagement to use any set formes, especially of the Churches composition. More plainly thus.

47.

2. Doth not the Minister confine and restraine the spirit of the Lords People, when they are tyed to his forme? It would sound of more liberty to their spirits, that every one might make a prayer of his owne, and all pray together; and not be forced or confined to the Ministers single dictate, and private spirit. It is true, it would breed confusions, and therefore they might pray silently till the Sermon began, and not for the avoiding one inconvenience runne into a greater, and to avoid the disorder of a popular noyse restraine the blessed Spirit, for even in this case as wel as in the other,
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Where the spirit of God is, there must be liberty.

3. If the spirit must be at liberty, who shall assure us this liberty must be in formes of prayer? And if so, whether also it must be in publike prayer, and will it not suffice that it be in private? And if in publike prayers, is not the liberty of the spirit, sufficiently preserved in that the publicke spirit is free? That is, the Church hath power upon occasion to alter and increase her Letanyes. By what argument shall any man make it so much as probable, that the holy Ghost is injured, if every private Ministers private spirit shall be guided (and therefore by necessary consequence limited) by the authority of the Churches publick spirit?

48.

4. Does not the Directory that thing which is here called restraining of the spirit? Does it not appoint every thing but the words? And after this is it not a goodly *Palladium* that is contended for, and a princely liberty that they leave unto the Spirit, to be free onely in the supplying the place of a Vocabulary and a *Copia Verborum*? For as for the matter, it is all there described and appointed, and to those determined senses the spirit must assist or not at all, onely for the words he shall take his choyce. Now I desire it may be considered sadly and seriously: Is it not as much injury to the spirit to restraints his matter, as to appoint his words? Which is the more considerable of the two, sense or Language, Matter or Words? I meane when they are taken singly and separately. For so they may very well be (for as if men prescribe the matter onely, the spirit may cover it with severall words and expressions, so if the spirit prescribe the words, I may still abound in variety of sense, and preserve the liberty of my meaning; we see that true in the various interpretations of the same

49.

words of Scripture.) So that in the greater of the two, the Spirit is restrained, when his matter is appointed, and to make him amends, for not trusting him with the matter without our directions and limitations, we trust him to say what he pleases, so it be to our sense, to our purposes. A goodly compensation surely !

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5. Did not Christ restrain the spirit of his Apostles, when he taught them to pray the Lords Prayer, whether his precept to his Disciples concerning it, was *Pray this*, or *Pray thus*, *Pray these words*, or *pray after this manner* ? or though it had beene lesse then either, and been onely a Directory for the matter, still it is a thing which our Brethren in all other cases of the same nature are resolved perpetually to call a restraint. Certainly then this pretended restraint, is no such formidable thing. These men themselves doe it by directing all the matter, and much of the manner, and Christ himselfe did it, by prescribing both the matter, and the words too.

51.

6. These restraints (as they are called) or determinations of the Spirit, are made by the Spirit himselfe. For I demand, when any Assembly of Divines appoint the matter of Prayers to all particular Ministers as this hath done, is that appointment by the Spirit or no ? If no, then for ought appeares, this Directory not being made by Gods Spirit, may be an enemy to it. But if this appointment be by the Spirit, then the determination and limitation of the Spirit, is by the Spirit himselfe, and such indeed is every pious and prudent constitution of the Church in matters spirituall : Such as was that of S. Paul to the Corinthians, when he prescribed orders for publique prophesying, and interpretation, and speaking with tongues. The spirit of some he so restrained, that

that he bound them to hold their peace, he permitted but two or three to speak at one meeting, the rest were to keep silence, though possibly six or seven might at that time have the Spirit.

7. Is it not a restraint of the Spirit to sing a Psalm in meeter by appointment? Clearly as much as appointing formes of prayer or Eucharist. And yet that we see done daily, and no scruple made. Is not this to be partiall in judgement, and inconsiderate of what wee doe?

8. And now after all this strife, what harme is there in restraining the spirit in the present sense? What prohibition, what law, what reason or revelation is against it? What inconvenience in the nature of the thing? For can any man be so weake as to imagine a despite is done to the spirit of grace, when those gifts to his Church are used regularly and by order? As if prudence were no gift of Gods spirit, as it helps in government, and the ordering spirituall matters were none of those graces which Christ when he ascended up on high gave unto Men. But this whole matter is wholly a stranger to reason, and never seen in Scripture.

For Divinity never knew any other vicious restraining of the Spirit, but either suppressing those holy incitements to virtue and good life, which Gods Spirit ministers to us externally or internally, or else a forbidding by publike authority the Ministers of the word and Sacraments, to speake such truths as God hath commended, and so taking away the liberty of prophesying. The first is directly vicious *In materia speciale*, the second is tyrannicall and Antichristian. And to it persecution of true religion is to be reduced. But as for this pretended limiting or restraining the spirit,

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viz. by appointing a regular forme of prayer, it is so very a Chimera, that it hath no footing or foundation upon any ground where a wise man may build his confidence.

55. 9. But lastly, how if the spirit must be restrained, and that by precept Apostolicall? That calls us to a new account. But if it be not true, what means Saint Paul, by saying *The spirits of the Prophets must be subject to the Prophets*? What greater restraint then subjection? If subjected, then they must be ruled; if ruled, then limited, prescribed unto, and as much under restraint as the spirits of the superiour Prophets shall judge convenient. I suppose by this time this objection will trouble us no more. But perhaps another will.

56. For why are not the Ministers to be left as well to their liberty in making their Prayers as their Sermons? I answer, the Church may if she will, but whether she doth well or no let her consider. This I am sure, there is not the same reason, and I feare the experience the world hath already had of it, will make demonstration enough of the inconvenience. But however the differences are many.

57. 1. Our prayers offered up by the Minister, are in behalfe and in the name of the people, and therefore great reason they should know beforehand, what is to be presented, that if they like not the message, they may refuse to communicate, especially since people are so divided in their opinions, in their hopes, and in their faiths: it being a duty to refuse Communion with those prayers which they thinke to have in them, the matter of sinne or doubting. Which reason on the other part ceases, for the Minister being to speak from God to the people, if he speakes what he ought not, God can right himselfe, however

however is not partner of the sin, as in the other case, the people possibly may be.

2. It is more fit a liberty be left in preaching than praying, because the addresse of our discourses and exhortations are to be made according to the understanding and capacity of the audience, their prejudices are to be removed, all advantages to be taken, and they are to be surprized that way they lye most open [*But being crafty I caught you*, saith Saint Paul to the *Corinthians*] and discourses and arguments *ad hominem*, upon their particular principles and practices may more move them than the most polite and accurate that doe not comply and wind about their fancies and affections. S. Paul from the absurd practice of being baptized for the dead, made an excellent argument to convince the *Corinthians* of the Resurrection. But this reason also ceases in our prayers. For God understandeth what we say sure enough, he hath no prejudices to be removed, no infirmities to be wrought upon, and a fine figure of Rhetoricke, a pleasant cadence, and a curious expression move not him at all; no other twinings and compliances stirre him, but charity, and humility, and zeale, and importunity, which all are things internall and spirituall. And therefore of necessity there is to be great variety of discourses to the people, and permissions accordingly, but not so to God, with whom a *Deus miserere* prevails as soone as the great office of 40. houres not long since invented in the Church of *Rome*, or any other prayers spun out to a length beyond the extension of the office of a Pharisee.

58.

3. I feare it cannot stand with our reverence to God, to permit to every spirit a liberty of publike addresse to him in behalfe of the people. Indeed he that is not fit to pray, is not alwayes fit to preach; but it is more safe

59.

to be bold with the people then with God, if the persons be not so fit. In that there may be indiscretion, but there may be impiety and irreligion in this. The people may better excuse and pardon an indiscretion or a rudeness (if any such should happen) then we may venture to offer it to God.

60.

4. There is a latitude of Theologie, much whereof is left to us, so without precise and cleere determination, that without breach either of faith or charity, men may differ in opinion : and if they may not be permitted to abound in their owne sense, they will be apt to complain of tyrannie over consciences, and that men Lord it over their faith. In Prayer this thing is so different, that it is imprudent & full of inconvenience to derive such things into our prayers, which may with good profit be matter of Sermons. Therefore here a liberty may well enough be granted, when there it may better be denied.

61.

5. But indeed, if I may freely declare my opinion, I think it were not amisse if the liberty of making Sermons were something more restrained than it is, and that either such persons onely were intrusted with the liberty for whom the Church her selfe may safely be responsible, that is, to men learned and pious, and that the other part, the *Vulgus Cleri*, should instruct the people out of the fountaines of the Church, and upon the publicke flock, till by so long exercise and discipline in the schooles of the Prophets, they may also be intrusted to minister of their owne unto the people. This I am sure was the practice of the Primitive Church when Preaching was as ably and religiously performed as now it is. But in this I prescribe nothing. But truly I thinke the reverend Divines of the Assembly are many of my mind in this particular, and that they observe a liberty indulged to some persons to preach, which I thinke they
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had rather should hold their peace, and yet thinke the Church better edified in your silence than their Sermons.

6. But yet me thinks the argument objected, if it were turned with the edge the other way, would have more reason in it : and instead of arguing [*Why should not the same liberty be allowed in praying as in preaching*] it were better to substitute this. If they can pray with the spirit, why also do they not preach with the spirit? & if praying with the spirit be praying *ex tempore*, why shall they not preach *ex tempore* too, or else confesse that they preach without the spirit, or that they have not the gift of preaching? For to say that the gift of prayer, is a gift *ex tempore*, but the gift of preaching is with study and deliberation, is to become vaine and impertinent. *Quis enim discrevit?* Who hath made them of a different consideration? I mean as to this particular, as to their efficient cause. Nor reason, nor revelation, nor God, nor man.

To summe up all. If any man hath a mind to exercise his gift of Prayer, let him set himselfe to worke, & compose books of Devotion, (we have great need of them in the Church of *England*, so apparent need, that the Papists have made it an objection against us) and this his gift of Prayer will be to edification. But otherwise, I understand it is more fit for ostentation, then any spirituall advantage. For God heares us not the sooner for our *extempore*, long, or conceived prayers, possibly they may become a hindrance, as in the cases before instanced. And I am sure if the people be intelligent, and can discern they are hindred in their devotion, for they dare not say *Amen* till they have considered, and many such cases will occur in *ex tempore* prayers, that need much considering before we attest them. But if the people be not intelligent, they are apt to swallow all the inconveniencies

niencies which may multiply in so great a licence; and therefore it were well that the Governours of the Church who are to answer for their soules, should judge for them, before they say *Amen*, which judgement cannot be without set formes of Lyrurgie. My sentence therefore is, *ἵνα μένωμεν ὡς ἔσμεν*, Let us be as we are already. Few changes are for the better.

64.

For if it be pretended, that in the Lyrurgie of the Church of *England*, which was composed with much art and judgement by a Church that hath as much reason to be confident she hath the Spirit and gifts of Prayer, as any single person hath, and each learned man that was at its first composition, can as much prove, that he had the Spirit, as the objectors now adayes: (and he that boasts most, certainly hath the least.) If I say it be pretended, there are many errours and inconveniences both in the order and the matter of the Common-Prayer booke, made by such men, with so much industry: How much more, and with how much greater reason may we all dread the inconveniencies and disorders of *ex tempore* prayers: where there is neither conjunction of heads, nor premeditation, nor industry, nor method, nor art, nor any of those things (or at least not in the same degree) which were likely to have exempted the Common-Prayer booke from errors and disorders. If these things be in the green tree, what will be done in the dry?

65.

But if it be said, the *ex tempore* and conceived prayers will be secured from error by the Directory, because that chalkes them out the matter, I answer, it is not sufficient, because if when men study both the matter and the words too, they may be (and it is pretended are actually) ^{deceived} much more may they when the matter is left much more at liberty, and the words under no restraint
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at all. And no man can avoid the pressure and the weight of this, unlesse the Compilers of the Directory were infallible, and that all their followers are so too, of the certainty of which I am not yet fully satisfied.

And after all this I would fain know, what benefit & advantages shall the Church of *England* in her united capacity, and every particular in the diffused capacity receive by this new device? For the publike it is cleer, that whether the Ministers pray before they study, or study before they pray, there must needs be infinite difformity in the publike worship, and all the benefits which were before the consequents of conformity and unity, will be lost, and if they be not valuable, I leave it to all them to consider, who know the inconveniences of publike disunion, and the publike disunion that is certainly consequent to them who doe not communicate in any common formes of worship. And to think that the Directory will bring conformity, is as if one should say, that all who are under the same Hemisphere are joyned *in communi patria*, and will love like countrymen, for under the Directory there will be as different religions, and as different desires, and as differing formes as there are severall varieties of men and manners under the one halfe of heaven, who yet breathe under the same halfe of the Globe. But I ask again, what benefit can the publiick receive by this form, or this no form, for I know not whethe to call it. Shall the matter of prayers be better in all Churches? shall God be better served? shall the word of God and the best patternes of prayers be ^{now} alwayes exactly followed? It is well if it be. But there is security given us by the Directory, for the matter is left at every mans dispose for all that, and we must depend upon the honesty of every particular for it; and if any man proves a Heretick or a Knave, then he may introduce what im-

piety he please, into the publick formes of Gods worship; and there is no law made to prevent it, and it must be cured afterwards if it can; but before hand it is not prevented at all by the Directory, which trusts every man. But I observe, that all the benefit which is pretended, is, that it will make an able Ministry, which I confesse I am very much from beleeving, and so will every man be that considers what kind of men they are that have been most zealous for that way of conceived prayer. I am sure that very few of the learnedst, very many ignorants, most thole who have made least abode in the Schooles of the Prophets. And that I may disgrace no mans person, we see Tradesmen of the most illiberall arts, and women pretend to it, and doe it with as many words (and that's the maine thing) with as much confidence, and specciousnesse, and spirit, as the best among them. And it is but a small portion of learning that will serve a man to make conceived formes of prayer, which they may have easily upon the stock of other men, or upon their own fancie, or upon any thing in which no learning is required. He that knows not this, knowes nothing of the craft that may be in the Preachers trade. But what? Is God better served? I would faine see any authority, or any reason, or any probability for that. I am sure ignorant men offer him none of the best sacrifices *ex tempore*, and learned men will be sure to deliberate, & know, God is then better served, when he is served by a publike, then when by a private spirit. I cannot imagine what accruements wil hence come to the publike: it may be some advantages may be to the private interests of men. For there are a sort of men whom our blessed Saviour noted, who do *devoure widowes houses*, and for a *pretence make long prayers*. They make prayers, and they make them long, by this means they receive double advantage.

vantages, for they get reputation to their ability, and to their piety. And although the Common-prayer booke in the Preface to the Directory be charged with unnecessary length, yet we see that most of these men, they that are most eminent or would be so, make their prayers longer, and will not lose the benefits which their credit gets, and they by their credit, for making their prayers.

Adde to this that there is no promise in Scripture, that he who prays *ex tempore* shall be heard the better, or that he shall be assisted at all to such purposes, and therefore to innovate in so high a matter without a warrant to command us, or a promise to warrant us, is no better then vanity in the thing, and presumption in the person. He therefore that considers that this way of prayer is without all maner of precedent in the primitive Church, against the example of all famous Churches in all Christendome in the whole descent of 15. Ages, without all command and warrant of Scripture, that it is unreasonable in the nature of the thing, against prudence and the best wisdom of humanity, because it is without deliberation, that it is innovation in a high degree without that authority, which is truly and by inherent and ancient right, to command and prescribe to us in external forms of worship, that it is much to the disgrace of the first reformers of our Religion, that it gives encouragement to the Papists, to quarrell with some reason and more pretence against our Reformation, as being by the Directory confessed to have been done in much blindness, and therefore might erre in the excess as well as in the defect, in the throwing out too much, as casting off too little, which is the more likely, because they wanted ^{no} zeale to carry them farre enough. He that considers the universall difformity of publike worship, & the no means
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of union, no Symbol of publick communion being publickly consigned, that all heresies may with the same authority be brought into our prayers, and offered to God in behalf of the people, with the same authority that any truth may, all the matter of our prayers being left to the choice of all men, of all perswasions, and then observes that actually there are in many places, heresie, and blasphemy, and impertinency, & illiterate rudenesses put into the devotions of the most Solemne dayes, and the most publike meetings; and then lastly, that there are divers parts of Lyturgie, for which no provisions at all is made in the Directory, and the very administration of the Sacraments left so loosely, that if there be any thing essentiall in the formes of Sacraments, the Sacrament may come ineffectuall by want of due words, and due ministration. I say he that considers all these things (and many more he may consider) will finde that particular men are not fit to be intrusted to offer in publike with their private spirit, to God, for the people, in such solemnities, in matters of so great concernment, where the honour of God, the benefit of the people, the interest of Kingdomes, the being of a Church, the unity of minds, the conformity of practice, the truth of perswasions, and the salvation of soules, are so very much concerned, as they are in the publike prayers of a whole Nationall Church. An unlearned man is not to be trusted, and a wise man dare not trust himselfe; he that is ignorant cannot, he that is knowing will not.



F I N I S.